


Myth WRITing Unit

BRAIN WAVES

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TEACHER RESOURCES



Myth Writing Unit

Unit Stats	Myth Writing Unit Grade Levels: 5-8 Unit Duration:
Unit Overview	In this 8 day, Common Core aligned unit, students will demonstrate an understanding of the myth genre as they write their own myths. The unit begins with a review of the characteristics of myths and student analysis of a sample myth. Then, following a step-by-step process that includes pre-writing, writing, revising, editing, conferencing, and then writing a final copy, students will write an original and creative myth. In this unit students create a myth that creatively presents an explanation of an unknown. In addition, students' myths will be filled with genre characteristics as well as strong voice and word choice.
Common Core State Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RL.1, RL.2, RL.3 - W.3, W.3a, W.3b, W.3c, W.3d, W.3e, W.4, W.5, W.10 - L.1, L.2, L.3, L.5 - SL.1
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading and Analysis - Plot Development - Characterization - Sensory Details - Dialogue - Writing Process: Pre-Writing, Drafting, Revising, Editing, Publishing
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Class set of student writing packets - Final copy paper - Class set of rubrics
Assessment	Original Myth – use rubric assessment tool (100 Points)

MYTH WRITING UNIT PLAN

DAY	PLANS
1	<p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Give notes on myths. - Have students brainstorm examples of myths that they have read, heard, or seen. <p>Reading and Reacting to a Sample Myth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read “Big Turtle”. - Have students work independently, with partners, or with small groups to answer the questions in response to the myth. - Share and discuss responses.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review notes and characteristics of myths. <p>Prewriting</p> <p>Step 1: Choosing the Unknown</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explain to students that they will be writing a myth. - Lead students through Step 1: Choosing the Unknown <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possible ideas: <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Element of Nature: Thunderstorms, green grass, the four seasons, the moon and the stars, fire</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Animal and Characteristic: Giraffe—long neck, Turtle—hard shell, Zebra—stripes, Cow—spots</p> - Have students select a myth topic. <p>Step 2: Explaining the Unknown</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lead students through Step 2: Explaining the Unknown - Give students an opportunity to share their ideas with a partner (perhaps even generating new ideas). - Have students select their myth explanation. <p>Step 3: Create a Character</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lead students through Step 3: Create a Character - Discuss each character question with students as they develop their main character. (Note that their main character’s characteristics may change over the course of the myth.)

DAY	PLANS
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review myths and myth characteristics - Give students an opportunity to review their myth topic and character that they developed in the previous class. - Ask students to think about where their myth will take place and the main events in their myth. - Then have students meet with a partner to quickly discuss their initial ideas. <p>Step 4: Create a Setting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lead students through Step 4: Create a setting - Encourage students to incorporate sensory details to describe their setting. <p>Step 5: Create a Plot Outline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lead students through Step 5: Create a Plot Outline - Discuss beginnings, middle and ends with students. - Have students start the climax of their story. - Ensure that students include a resolution in their plot outline. - Have students get with a different partner and discuss the latest developments in their myth pre-write. Have students add any new ideas generated from partner discussion to their pre-write pages.
4	<p>Step 6: Write a Myth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Give notes on the elements that they should incorporate into their writing. <p>Rough Draft</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using the paper in their packets have students write their rough drafts. - Encourage students to write their myth on every other line. - Have students incorporate all the elements from their pre-writing pages: character, setting, plot, and theme (unknown explained) <p>Homework: Complete rough draft for next class.</p>

DAY	PLANS
5	<p>Review characteristics of myths.</p> <p>Step 7: Improve Your Beginning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Give notes on ways to improve beginnings. - Have students write a possible beginning for their myth for each beginning suggestion. - After students have written three new beginnings, have them select one and insert it into their drafts. <p>Step 8: Add Dialogue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss the importance of dialogue in writing. - Lead students through Step 8: Add Dialogue - Have students select a portion of their rough draft that fits into each category. - Then have students experiment with writing dialogue to achieve the same purpose of their non-dialogue writing. - Have students insert their new dialogue into their rough drafts. <p>Homework: Review and make five additional revisions to your rough draft (in a different color pen)</p>
6	<p>Editing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have students review their drafts and complete each of the editing tasks. <p>Peer Conferences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - With partners, have students read and review their myths. - Partners should complete the peer conference worksheets noting what they like, questions they have, and ideas for improvement. <p>Review rubric with students.</p>
7	<p>Final Copy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Distribute paper for students to write their final copy of their myths.
8	<p>Sharing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Give students an opportunity to share their myths with the class.

Name _____

Date _____

Myth Rubric

	4	3	2	1
Explanation of Unknown	Explanation is exceptional.	Explanation is focused.	Explanation occasionally goes off topic or is confused.	No evidence of an organized explanation.
Creativity of Explanation	Myth demonstrates a high degree of creativity.	Myth demonstrates some creativity.	Myth demonstrates very little creativity.	Myth does not demonstrate creativity.
Elements of a myth	Well developed setting, characters, and plot.	Setting, characters, and plot developed; but some aspects tell rather than show.	Elements of the myth need more development.	Missing one or more myth elements.
Engagement	Myth is engaging through compelling lead and exceptional dialogue.	Lead and dialogue contribute to the myth's engagement level.	Lead and/or dialogue do not contribute to the engagement level.	Myth does not have an engaging lead or dialogue.
Conventions	No obvious conventions errors.	A few conventions errors are present.	Several conventions errors are present.	Conventions errors significantly interfere with the myth's readability.

Total _____ x 5 = _____ / 100

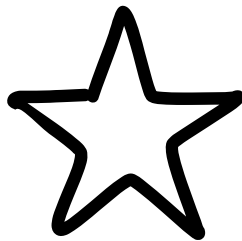
STUDENT PACKET



WRITING

A

MYTH



Name _____



Building Background



Qualities of a Myth



Elements of Storytelling



Myths contain these elements of storytelling:



Plot –



Characters –



Setting –



Theme –

Myth Brainstorm



Reading a Myth

This myth was told by the Huron Indians

Big Turtle

Millions of years ago, the world had two parts: Animals lived in the lower part, which was completely covered in water and had no land or soil. Sky people lived in the upper part, called 'Sky World.'

The Sky World had lots of dry land and rich soil, with beautiful mountains and valleys. One morning a young girl from Sky World went for a long walk. She walked and walked until she was exhausted. "I'm so tired, I need to rest," she said. So she sat down under the spreading branches of a great apple tree and swiftly fell asleep.

Suddenly, there was a thunderous rumbling sound and the ground began to crack and split. A huge hole appeared next to the apple tree.

"What's happening?" shrieked the terrified girl. She tried to scramble away from the large hole in the earth, but it was too late. The great apple tree slid through the hole, and she went with it, tumbling head over heels towards the watery world below.

"Help! Help!" shouted the girl. Fortunately, two Swans were swimming below and they saw the lass plummeting from the sky.

"Let's catch her before she hits the water," the Swans squawked to one another, and they spread their wings together and caught the girl on their feathery soft backs.

"Thank you ever so much for saving me," the young girl gushed, "but what do I do now? I can't get back up to Sky World and I can't stay on your backs forever!"

"We'll take you to Big Turtle," replied the Swans. "He is very wise and he will now just what to do."

After listening to the young girl's story, Big Turtle called all the animals in Water World to a meeting. He told them an ancient story about dry soil being found deep under the water.

"If we can get some of that soil, we can build an island on my back for you to live on," Big Turtle promised the girl.

Otter, Beaver, and Muskrat started arguing over who would dive for the soil. "I'll go," declared sleek Otter, brushing his glossy fur.

"No! I'll hunt for the soil!" cried bossy Beaver, slapping the water with his big, flat tail.

"I'm the strongest swimmer," Muskrat reminded them. "It only makes sense for me to go on this adventure."

Just then Toskwaye, the Tiny Toad, popped out of the water. "I'll go. I can dive very deep," she squeaked.

The other animals started laughing and pointing at Toskwaye. "You? You're too small and ugly to help!" cried the others, laughing.

"Be quiet!" commanded Big Turtle in a loud, stern voice. "Everyone in Water World is equal and everyone will have a chance to try!" he stated.

Sleek Otter smoothed his glossy fur, took a deep breath, and slid into the water. He was gone for a long time before he came up gasping for air. "It was too deep," he gasped. "I couldn't dive that far!"

Bossy Beaver slapped the water with his tail as he disappeared. After a very long time, he surfaced and panted, "It's too far. No one can dive that deep!"

Musktrat tried next, but he, too, failed, declaring it an impossible task that no one could complete.

"Now it's my turn," squealed Toskwaye the Tiny Toad. She took a deep breath and jumped into the water. She was gone a very long time and everyone thought they would never see her again.

Suddenly, Otter pointed at the water, shouting "Look, look! Bubbles!" Toskwaye's small, ugly face appeared through the water. She spat a few grains of soil onto Big Turtle's back, then fell back into the water – dead. Turtle ordered the others to rub the soil grains and spread them around on his shell. The grains grew and grew, until a large island was formed – large enough for Sky Girl to live on. The island grew into the world as we know it today and the descendants of Sky Girl became Earth's people.

Today, some people say the whole world still rests on Big Turtle's back. When he gets tired and shifts his position, we have earthquakes.

Tiny Toad has not been forgotten, either. American Natives call her "Mashutaha," which means 'Our Grandmother' and no one is allowed to harm her.

Reacting to the Reading

1. What does the myth attempt to explain?

2. What is the explanation for how the Earth began?

3. List 3 characters and a specific character trait associated with each character.

<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

4. How does the myth's beginning attempt to get the reader's attention?

5. Find two examples of engaging voice.

6. List two examples of original word choice.

7. What characteristics can you identify in "Big Turtle" that prove it is a myth?

STEP 1 – CHOOSING THE UNKNOWN

A myth is story that has been made up and passed from one generation to the next. A myth is meant to explain something that people believe (such as how the earth was made) or something in nature (such as thunder or lightening).

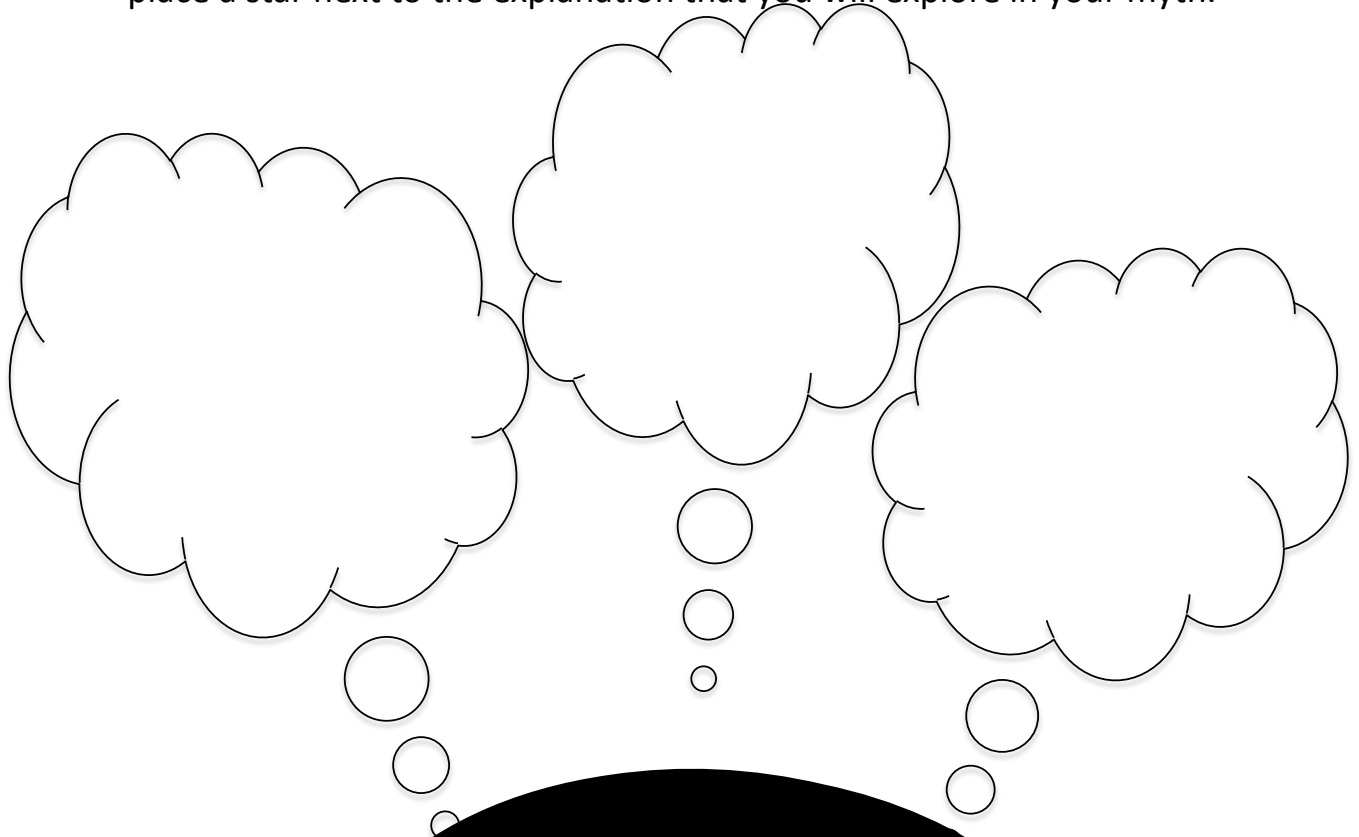
Element in Nature	Animal and Characteristic
- snow falling from the sky	- Pig - curly tail

My myth topic: _____

STEP 2 – EXPLAINING THE UNKNOWN

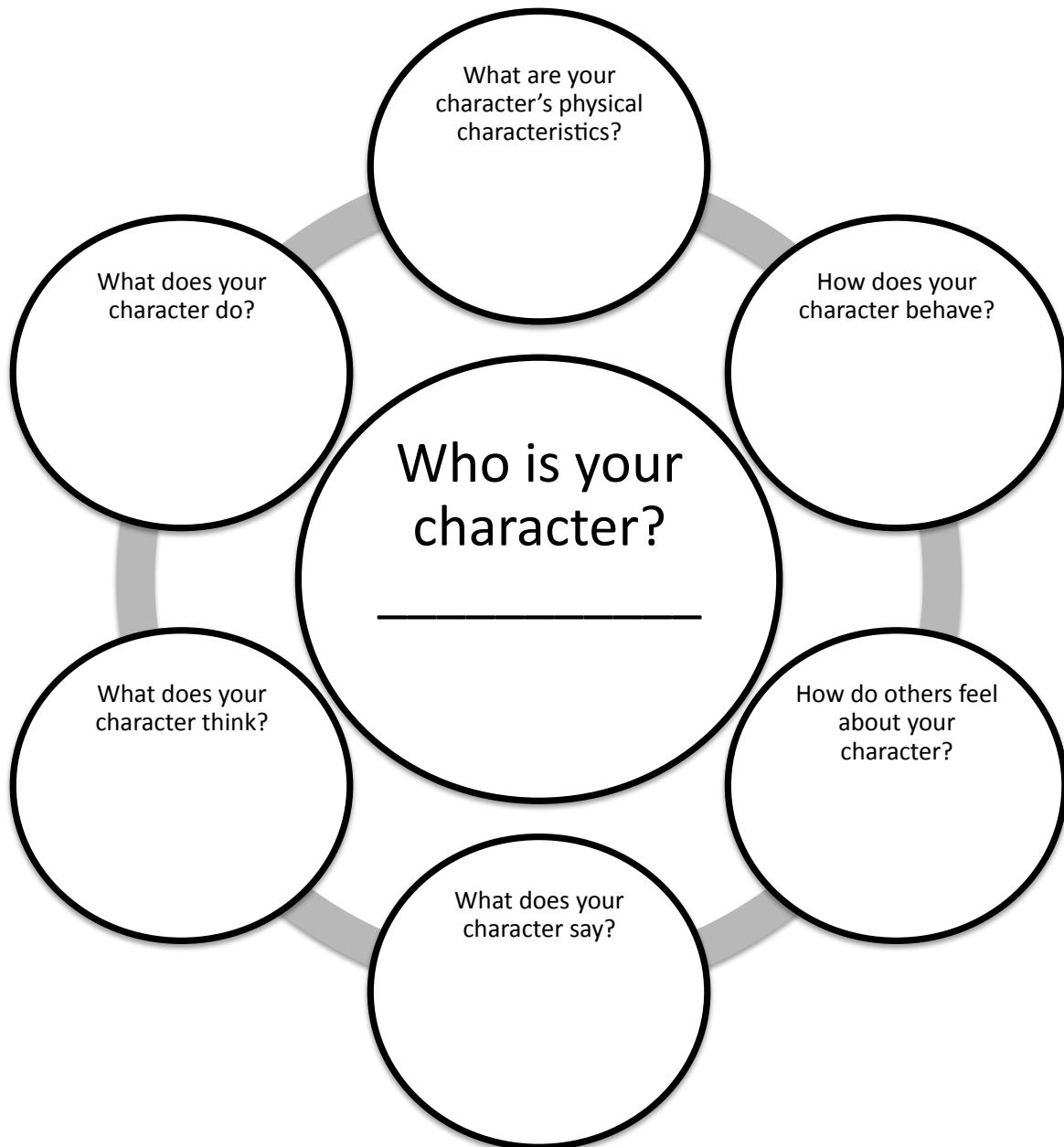
Now it is time to imagine how your unknown could be explained.
What could have caused your myth topic to happen? How did your myth topic come to be?

Fill in the thought bubbles with possible explanations for your myth. Then, place a star next to the explanation that you will explore in your myth.



STEP 3 – CREATE A CHARACTER

Your myth will have many characters. However, one will be your main character. It's important to create well-developed characters. Answer the questions below to begin to develop your character.



Myth Explanation: _____

STEP 4 – CREATE A SETTING

The setting is the place and the time in which a story takes place. In order to create a setting, you must use colorful, descriptive words.

Place (city, castle, cemetery, forest)	
Add Description	
Time (afternoon, fall, mornings)	
Add Description	
Environment (weather, physical features)	
Add Description	

STEP 5 – CREATE A PLOT OUTLINE

It's time to put the main events of your myth in order. Most myths are organized in chronological order. In the quick list below, list the main events of your myth. The ending should be an explanation of the unknown.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

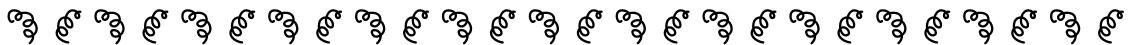
6.

7.

8.

9.

10.



STEP 6 – WRITE A MYTH

Your goal is to write a myth. As you write, you will need to keep in mind the following writing traits.

IDEAS	
ORGANIZATION	
VOICE	
SENTENCE FLUENCY	
CONVENTIONS	
WORD CHOICE	

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STEP 7 – IMPROVE YOUR BEGINNING

Your myth should interest readers right away. That means that your beginning needs to get your reader's attention.

Here are some ways to get your myth off to an engaging start:

1. Start in the Middle: _____

Crash! The tree hit the ground with a thunderous thud.

Your Turn:

2. Begin with Dialogue: _____

"Stop that right now," she hissed at her brother.
"Never!" he shouted back.

Your Turn:

3. Present a Surprising Statement or Fact: _____

There was a time when giraffes had very, very short necks.

Your Turn:

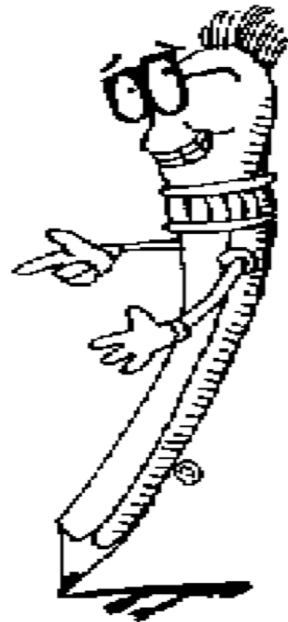
STEP 8 – ADD DIALOGUE

Plan to use dialogue in at least three places in your myth. Brainstorm 3 ways you can use dialogue below.

Use Dialogue to...	Without Dialogue	With Dialogue
Show Personality		
Keep the action moving		
Add information		

Editing Tasks

1. Check for spelling errors. **Circle** any words you are not sure you spelled correctly. Find the correct spelling.
2. **Trace over** capital letters in:
 - Names
 - Specific Places
 - First words of sentences
3. **Draw an arrow** to show indentation for:
 - Paragraphs
 - New speakers in dialogue
4. **Trace over** the end punctuation after every sentence.
5. Check your commas. **Circle** the commas you used in:
 - Lists of items
 - Compound sentences
 - Direct address to people
 - Setting off interjections
 - Dates
6. **Use** apostrophes to show ownership.
7. Check and **underline** these words:
 - They're / There / Their
 - Your / You're
 - It's / Its
 - To / two / too
8. Did you stay in **PAST tense**?
9. Did you stay in **FIRST PERSON**?



Peer Conference

Writer: _____

Peer Editor: _____

Tell What You Like	<div style="margin-bottom: 10px;">1. _____</div> <div style="margin-bottom: 10px;">2. _____</div> <div style="margin-bottom: 10px;">3. _____</div>
Ask Questions	<div style="margin-bottom: 10px;">1. _____</div> <div style="margin-bottom: 10px;">2. _____</div> <div style="margin-bottom: 10px;">3. _____</div>
Give Advice	<div style="margin-bottom: 10px;">1. _____</div> <div style="margin-bottom: 10px;">2. _____</div> <div style="margin-bottom: 10px;">3. _____</div>

Writer's Action Plan

1. _____
2. _____

KEYS





Building Background



A myth is a traditional story, usually of unknown authorship, that deals with basic questions about the universe.

The purpose of a myth is to entertain, inform, and/or explain



Qualities of a Myth

- Often unrealistic and illogical
- Can have inanimate objects and characters that change
- Provides answers to questions that humans have
- Often explain the origins of things



Elements of Storytelling

Myths contain these elements of storytelling:



Plot – the sequence of events that make up a story



Characters – a person, an animal, or an imaginary creature that takes part in the action of a literary work



Setting – the time and place of the action



Theme – the message about life or human nature that is conveyed



Myth Brainstorm



Reacting to the Reading

1. What does the myth attempt to explain?
_____The myth attempts to explain how the world that we know today came to be. It also gives an explanation for earthquakes.
2. What is the explanation for how the Earth began?
_____Earth grew on top of Turtle's back after Tokway swam very deep to find soil. After the soil was rubbed on Turtle's back, the soil grew into the Earth we have today. Earthquakes occur when Turtle gets tired and shifts his position.
3. List 3 characters and a specific character trait associated with each character.

___Big Turtle	Wise
___Beaver	Bossy
___Otter	Sleek
4. How does the myth's beginning attempt to get the reader's attention?
_____The beginning gets the reader's attention by starting with a shocking statement, "Millions of years ago, the world had two parts".
5. Find two examples of engaging voice.
___Answers will vary. Possible responses: "brushing his glossy fur", "commanded Big Turtle in a loud, stern voice"
6. List two examples of original word choice.
___Answers will vary. "Tumbling head over heels", "beautiful mountains and valleys", "lass plummeting from the sky"
7. What characteristics can you identify in "Big Turtle" that prove it is a myth?
___Addresses a basic question about the universe; includes plot, setting, theme, characters

STEP 6 – WRITE A MYTH

Your goal is to write a myth. As you write, you will need to keep in mind the following writing traits.

IDEAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Use specific details•Make the reader want to know what happens next
ORGANIZATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Make sure you have a clear beginning, middle and end•Put events in a chronological order
VOICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Use a personal voice•Include dialogue
SENTENCE FLUENCY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Vary sentence lengths
CONVENTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and grammar are all correct
WORD CHOICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Use words that express feelings•Add description

STEP 7 – IMPROVE YOUR BEGINNING

Your myth should interest readers right away. That means that your beginning needs to get your reader's attention.

Here are some ways to get your myth off to an engaging start:

1. **Start in the Middle:** Begin your story at the height of the action.

Crash! The tree hit the ground with a thunderous thud.

Your Turn: _____

2. **Begin with Dialogue:** Bring readers into the action by starting your myth with two (or more) characters speaking.

"Stop that right now," she hissed at her brother.
"Never!" he shouted back.

Your Turn: _____

3. **Present a Surprising Statement or Fact:** Start your myth with a bang! Reveal something surprising and your readers will definitely read more.

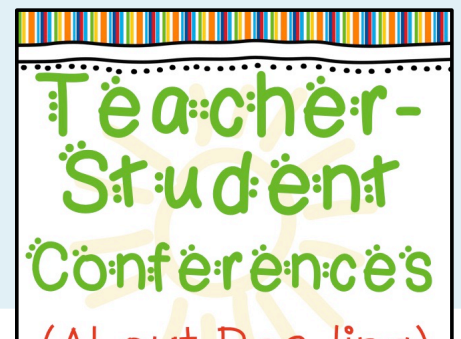
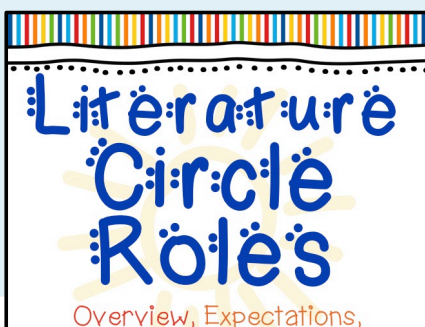
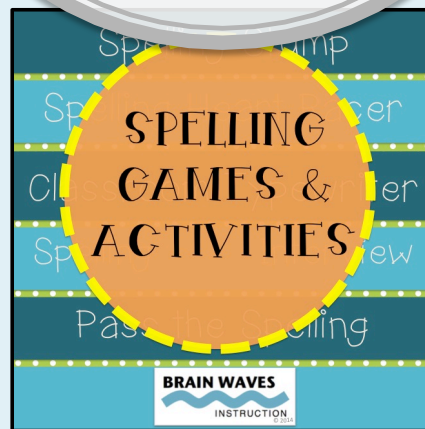
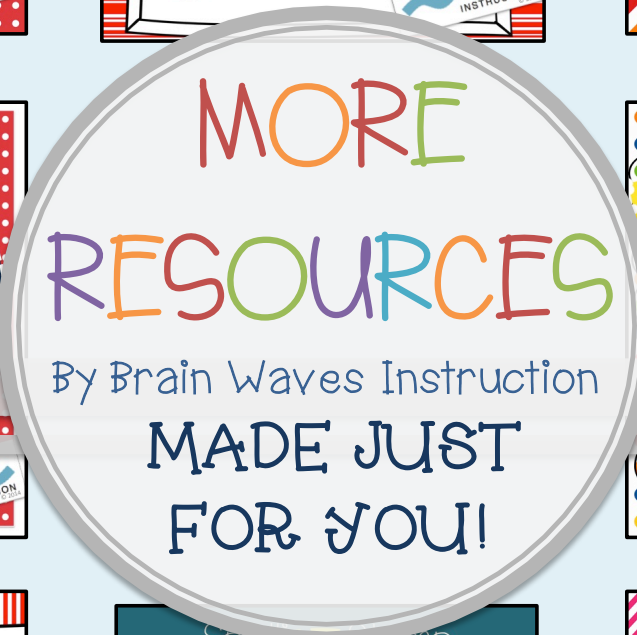
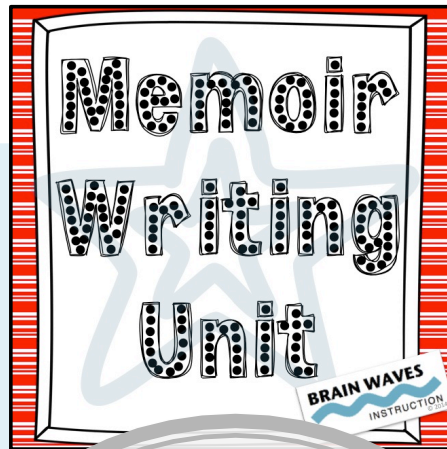
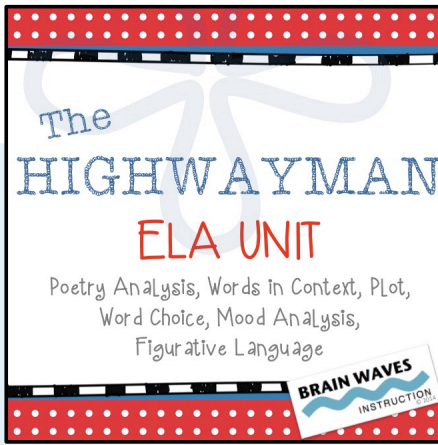
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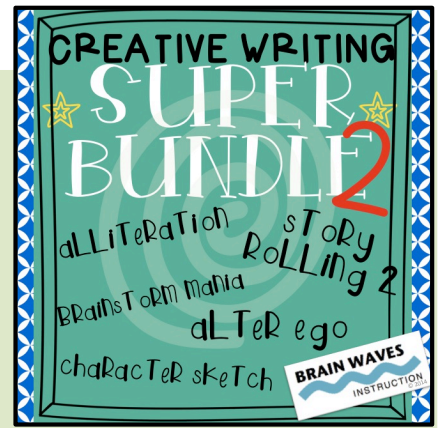
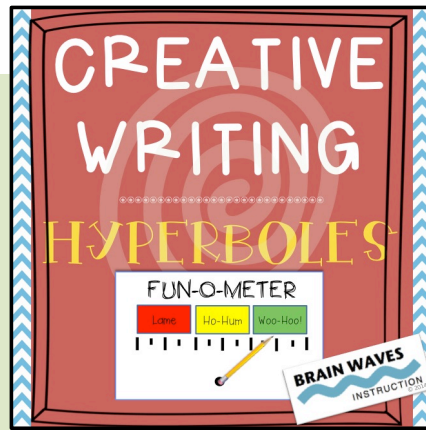
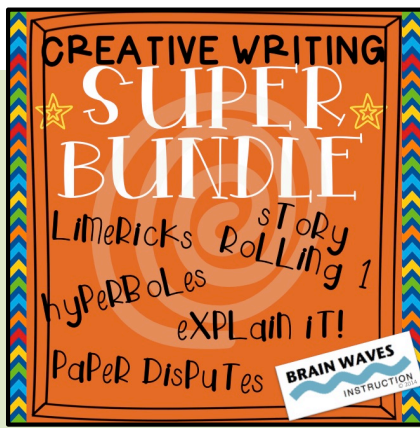
Your Turn: _____

STEP 8 – ADD DIALOGUE

Plan to use dialogue in at least three places in your myth. Brainstorm 3 ways you can use dialogue below.

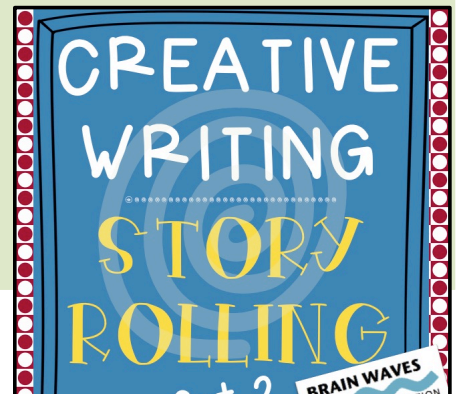
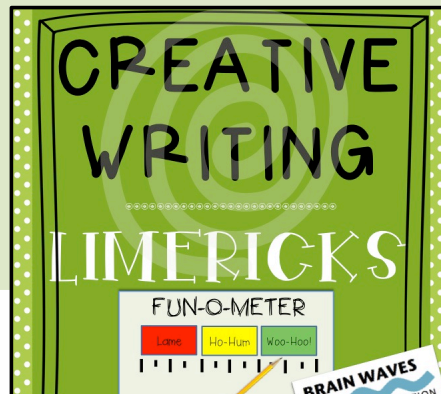
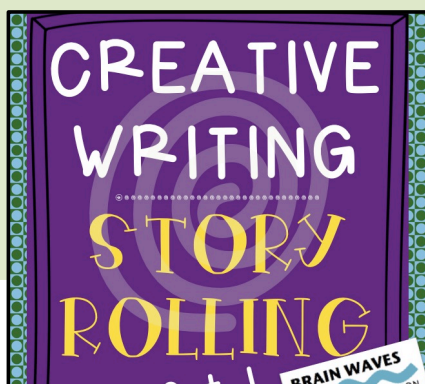
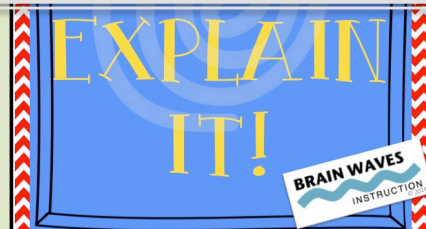
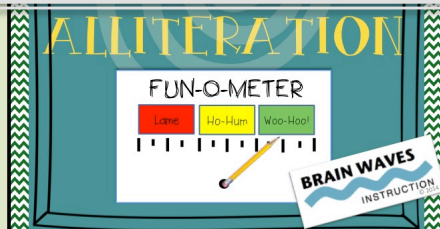
Use Dialogue to...	Without Dialogue	With Dialogue
Show Personality	My teacher gave me a detention	"You have a detention young man," my teacher growled at me through clenched teeth.
Keep the action moving	Then my friend told me all about her birthday presents.	"You won't believe what I got for my birthday," my best friend said. "What? Tell me quick, I can't wait," I replied.
Add information	I saw my grandmother when I went to her house.	"Hello," my grandmother said in her kind, ninety-year-old voice.





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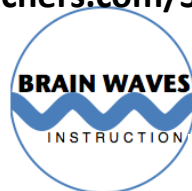
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Frames: Ink n Little Things - <https://www.etsy.com/shop/InknLittleThings>

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